



Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2004-2005

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Foreword from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

“Welcome to the first Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Lancaster City Council.

Progress has been made throughout 2004/05 towards adding value to the Council though the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, even though we faced a slow start due to the extent of the constitutional changes introduced in May 2004. Non-Executive Members have been faced with the challenge of getting to grips with new rôles, as well as learning how to ensure that Scrutiny really contributes to the democratic process.

In particular, we have published reports dealing with Allotments and with Poulton Area Renewal, both of which included a number of recommendations that were referred to Cabinet.

I am confident that this authority has come a long way in a very short time, and I would like to thank Councillors and Officers and congratulate them on their efforts. It is a measure of the value added by Scrutiny that a high proportion of the recommendations from Scrutiny Reviews and Task Groups have been adopted by Cabinet.

Thank you for reading this report.”



Councillor J. Roger Mace
Chairman

Statistics and Overview

This report sets out the work undertaken by Lancaster City Council under the Scrutiny powers (as set out in the Local Government Act 2000) during the municipal year 2004/05. The Act also places a duty on local authorities' Overview and Scrutiny functions to produce an Annual Report which this document represents.

2004/05 has been a year of change for Overview and Scrutiny at Lancaster City Council, it has seen the first full year of operation of the Overview and Scrutiny system which replaced the former Review Boards. As a result of this there are a few themes recurring throughout the year: these include consolidating work done by the previous Review Boards, dealing with outstanding business, finishing the work of existing Task Groups, creating and developing a member-led work programme, creating new Task Groups and considering Call-in requests. Whilst many achievements have been made, there is still much work to be done and there have been frustrations for both Members and Officers in the time that it has taken to establish and embed the new way of working at both the Officer and Member level.

Key Achievements

- Consideration of Forward Plan
- Introduction of new report format
- Public Involvement
- Recommendation tracking
- Holding Cabinet Members to account
- Introducing meaningful Scrutiny of performance
- Raising the profile of Overview and Scrutiny
- Number of recommendations adopted by Cabinet
- Improvement to Call-in procedure
- Media Coverage
- Work on allotments
- Introduction of Scrutiny Handbook
- Developing a member led approach
- Introduction of Cabinet Liaison Members
- Development of Scrutiny team at Member/Officer level
- Recognition of contribution of Overview and Scrutiny in annual management letter

Key Areas for Improvement

- Number of Task Groups in operation
- Reducing the reporting time for Task Groups
- Increasing the support to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme from service departments
- Further developing work programmes
- Scrutiny of Partnership working
- Further development of pre-decision Scrutiny
- Scrutiny of budget and voluntary sector grants
- Further involvement of the public in Overview and Scrutiny, particularly with regard to Task Groups.
- Improving scoping of Task Groups
- Improving the process for Officer attendance at Overview and Scrutiny meetings

Key achievements and areas for improvement are dealt with in greater detail later in this report.

For the first time, this Annual Report, which has been produced on behalf of the whole Overview and Scrutiny process, attempts to map the work of Overview and Scrutiny against the Council's objectives and core values, and highlight where work has been carried out to underpin and support each of these elements.

Core Values

- Putting the Needs of the Public First
- Equality of Opportunity
- Open, Responsive and Accountable Government and Sound Decision Making
- Sustainable Development
- Sound Financial Management
- Improving Services
- Community Leadership and Partnership

Corporate Objectives

- Meeting Essential Needs
- Taking Part
- Care and Respect for Everyone
- Life Long Learning
- Travel and Access
- Fun Creativity and Leisure
- Using Resources Wisely
- Protecting Wildlife and Landscapes
- Economy and Work
- Positive Planning and Development

Statistics 2004/05

STATISTIC	TOTAL
No. of Meetings (incl. Budget and Performance Panel and Task Groups)	31
No. of Call-ins	6
No. of Issues for Pre-Decision Scrutiny	2
No. of Cabinet Referrals	22
Percentage of Recommendations adopted from Scrutiny Reviews and Task Groups	91%

Pre-Decision Scrutiny

During the review of Overview and Scrutiny, the issue of pre-decision scrutiny was considered as an area for development at Lancaster City Council. Pre-decision scrutiny is the process where, based primarily on study of the Forward Plan (the Council's published plan of all 'Key Decisions' for the forthcoming three months) and information provided by Cabinet Liaison Councillors, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee selects decisions that it would like to consider before a decision is taken.

Scrutiny Handbook 2004

"Examining the Forward Plan will enable Members to highlight issues on which the Committee wishes to be consulted or feels it would be beneficial for a wider group of Councillors to consider decisions in order to add value to them at the pre-decision stage. These requests can then be built into the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme."

There are many benefits to this process, particularly that it can help to add value to decisions at the pre-decision stage, can widen consultation to include Non-Executive Councillors and it can also help to minimise the use of Call-in (a last resort).

In order to assist the development of this process, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee appointed one of its members as Pre-scrutiny Champion to take a lead. Councillor Langhorn was the first appointee to this post and he has met with Scrutiny Support Officers each time a Forward Plan has been published in order to identify potential issues for pre-decision scrutiny. Following this meeting he has contacted the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Cabinet Liaison Members and requested them to obtain further information regarding the decision. Based on such enquiry, issues have been built into the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and brought to Committee for discussion.

Pre-decision scrutiny is a new development at Lancaster City Council and its introduction has not been without difficulties, for example in establishing a clear timetable for pre-decision scrutiny. In order for decisions to be considered by the Committee, it is important that they are identified in plenty of time before they are taken. In theory, this should be simple, as three months' advance notice should be given of decisions to be taken. In reality, this has often not been the case, with regular notices of Key Decisions not in the Forward Plan being published - often at short notice. This impinges on the ability of Overview and Scrutiny to contribute to discussion of Key issues. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has requested a report from Councillor Langhorn on the functioning of the Forward Plan process and the effect that this has on Overview and Scrutiny. It is anticipated that pre-decision scrutiny will develop further in the coming year.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes Officers taking a proactive approach in offering them the opportunity to submit a response during the consultation phase of a decision, as recently was the case with regard to the Council's Smoking Policy.

The other element which still requires further development is the rôle played by Cabinet Liaison Councillors in identifying and obtaining further information on issues. It is intended that this will be assisted through the development of job descriptions for the new scrutiny roles such as Cabinet Liaison Members, Pre-decision Scrutiny Champion and Task Group Link Member.

Consultation Procedure

As Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillors Roger Mace and Emily Heath (working with the Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Barker) have played an active part in determining how any consultations the Council receives are dealt with and responded to. They have dealt with approximately two requests a week and decided between a variety of options for each consultation, including whether a response should be made and, if so, whether the response should be agreed by Council, Cabinet, or Officers or by some bespoke arrangement?



Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Cllr Roger Mace
(Chairman)



Cllr Sarah Fishwick
(from 15/12/04)



Cllr Susie Charles
(until 15/12/04)



Cllr Emily Heath
(Vice-Chairman)



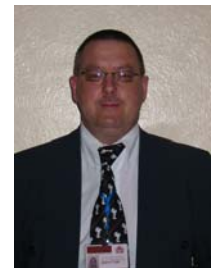
Cllr David Kerr



Cllr Stuart Langhorn



Cllr Evelyn Archer



Cllr Robert Redfern



Cllr Peter Robinson

Introduction

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has overall responsibility for the performance of all Overview and Scrutiny functions (under Local Government Act 2000) on behalf of the Council. The Committee has the power to scrutinise all Council functions and decisions that would not be dealt with by the Budget and Performance Panel. They also have the power to call-in any extreme decisions that members feel have not been made in accordance with the Council's decision-making principles.

Core Values 2004-05

"We want transparent decision-making, public consultation, two-way communication and public involvement so our services meet the needs of our citizens."

Other major functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee include:

- Consideration of Cabinet decisions after they have been put into effect.
- Consideration of the Forward Plan and commenting on Key Decisions.
- Conduct of reviews of policies, services and aspects of services where there is an identifiable need, by itself or through setting a Task Group.
- Working with other local authorities and organisations to carry out joint scrutiny.
- Assisting the Cabinet in the development of the Budget and Policy Framework.

- Creating Task Groups and setting their Terms of Reference.
- Reviewing and scrutinising the performance of the Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and appropriate Officers and receiving reports and updates.

Over the course of 2004/05 the Committee has called-in six items, scrutinised a number of Council decisions and issues, and has established two Task Groups. More information on a number of these items can be found under the section 'Scrutiny and the Council's Objectives' on page 28, which examines how the Scrutiny function in Lancaster has contributed to the Council's Corporate Objectives as set out in their Corporate Plan 2004/05. The six call-ins by the Committee are listed in the 'Call-in' section of the report on page 14. An indication of the Committee's Work Programme in 2004/05 is set out below and further information can be found in the Overview and Scrutiny minutes available on the Council's website.

Allotments

The Committee set up a small working group led by Councillor Emily Heath to consider the current position and provision of allotments within the district. Working with ALMA (Association of Lancaster and Morecambe Allotments) the group produced a detailed report setting out 11 recommendations for the improvement of allotments within the district and linking them more closely with objectives in the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. The Council's Cabinet received the report positively and enthusiastically with 10 recommendations being approved in full and one with a variation but which still achieves the desired objectives.

Smoking in Council Venues

In September 2004 the Committee received a presentation from Dr Frank Atherton (Director of Public Health, Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust) regarding the impact of smoking on the District. As a result of the presentation and through exploring issues such as the effects of passive smoking, the use of smoking shelters, the Smoke Free Cities initiative and education, the Committee recommended to Cabinet that smoking should be prohibited in all the Council's indoor public venues and that the Council sign up to the Northwest Smoke Free Cities initiative, both these recommendations being subsequently endorsed by Cabinet.

Abandoned Vehicles in Morecambe Bay

Over the year, the Committee has maintained a keen interest with regard to the approximately 30 abandoned vehicles in Morecambe Bay, in particular the environmental and navigational problems this may entail. The Committee remains concerned that there are still many questions over who owns the Bay and whose responsibility it is to remove the vehicles, despite the best efforts of the Leader of the Council and the Corporate Director (Community Services) to resolve the issue.

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

During this year, the final report of the Parks Task Group was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval. The Committee approved the Strategy and, in doing so, drew Cabinet's attention to the budgetary implications of proceeding with the Action Plan. The Committee also requested Cabinet to consider increasing funding for flower beds and gardens and using 'Your District Matters' to encourage commercial sponsorship.

Street Cleansing and Fly-tipping

The Committee held fact-finding discussions with Councillor Jon Barry and the Head of City Contract Services with regard to fly tipping. In the course of discussion, it was noted there appeared to be some success in the use of Police Community Support Officers to help prevent fly tipping through enforcement, the fact that this would only assist urban areas, and that there appeared to be a paradox in the 'van ban' at County Council tips and the high number of instances of fly tipping. As a result, the Committee requested that Officers investigate the feasibility of joint Overview and Scrutiny of this issue involving both City and County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committees to ensure a joined-up approach.

Flooding Strategy

The Committee heard from the Council's Principal Engineer regarding the Strategy for Protection from Coastal and Fluvial Flooding, in advance of the Strategy being considered by Cabinet. The Committee was apprised of the Council's responsibility for inspection and ownership of watercourses and explored the impact of flooding, particularly on low-lying areas from major developments such as at the University, the storm defences in Carnforth and the problems of waterlogged gardens.



Call-in and Holding Cabinet to Account

Call-in is only one of a number of ways in which Overview and Scrutiny can hold the Executive to account.

The choice to 'call-in' a Cabinet decision is not infrequent at Lancaster City Council, but is used with care. The procedure ensures that, if necessary, decisions or proposals made by the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member, a Cabinet Committee, an Officer with delegated authority, or under joint arrangements can be thoroughly examined, amendments proposed, and full debate entered into by all Members.

Scrutiny Handbook 2004

"The procedure ensures that decisions or proposals... can be thoroughly examined, amendments proposed, and full debate entered into by all Members."

It is the view of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that Call-ins are only used in **exceptional circumstances**. 'Exceptional circumstances' are where Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have evidence which suggests that there is a case to answer that the decision in question has not been made in accordance with the principles set out in Article 13 'Decision Making' of the Council's Constitution.

Call-ins 2004/05

Morecambe Action Plan – A Case Study

Members had called-in a Cabinet decision on the grounds that it had not been made in accordance with all the principles set out in Article 13 (Decision Making), in particular that not all options were considered and the reasons for arriving at the decision were not fully explained.

They felt particular concern that elected Members had not been given enough detailed information with regard to why this item had been agreed as urgent and not presented to full Cabinet.

Members at the meeting questioned the decision-makers regarding this and a number of other issues that they felt were of concern to the Council as a result of the Action Plan proceeding. After questioning, they were given time to discuss the answers provided and, in light of the evidence, how they wished the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to proceed. On returning, it was resolved:

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is relatively happy with the Cabinet decision after hearing further evidence from the Leader and Officers.
- 2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regrets that there was not an opportunity for full Council to discuss this item.

Although the Members of the Committee did not in this case recommend a change to the decision, the Call-in provided a powerful tool for holding decision-makers to account and requesting them to provide justification for their decisions. Such monitoring procedure encourages fairer, practical and logical decisions to be made that are in accordance with the principles of natural justice and the Council's Constitution.

Other Call-ins that have occurred over the past year are as follows:

Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement – June 2004

It was generally felt that the information presented to Cabinet was not sufficient to support a well-founded decision, as the report was felt to be lacking in risk assessment with regard to finance and staffing. Members considered the evidence and evaluated the decision. They came to the conclusion that the decision was justified and the Committee did not wish to refer it back to the decision maker for reconsideration.

Festivals Programme 2005 – November 2004

Members called-in the Festivals Programme, as they were concerned with a number of areas, in particular the decision to cut the Festival of Light and Water, due to its perceived importance to the economy of Morecambe. Through the course of the meeting it became evident that funding and sponsorship was a significant factor. From this the Committee were able to make an informed recommendation for Officers to increase efforts to find sponsorship and grants to enable the Festival of Light and Water, or a similar event, to be added to the core programme.

Provision of Public Conveniences – November 2004

The decision was called-in, as it was felt that it was contrary to the principles of the Council's Corporate Plan and Cabinet had failed to heed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's previous recommendations on the issue. Members felt that the decision did not put the needs of the public first, had not adhered to open, responsible and transparent decision-making, and was not supportive of sustainable development. The Committee voted unanimously to suggest a number of alterations to the recommendation of the report.

Evening and Night Time Parking Charges – January 2005

The decision to introduce a flat-rate charge for car parking in the evening and at night in Lancaster was called-in, as a number of Members felt that it would have an unfair impact on those people visiting places such as churches, drama groups etc, and on those who lived in rural areas using facilities in the City. It was also felt that it would have a dysfunctional outcome as it would encourage on-street parking in place of off-street car parking and that it would be disproportionate to the outcome, as it failed to distinguish the early-evening economy from the late night economy, which latter had the greater responsibility for the mess in the City Centre, for the cleaning of which the revenues were to be hypothecated.

The Committee recommended that Cabinet should not introduce evening and overnight parking charges because of these concerns, and that it should consider other methods of focusing resources on street cleansing. Cabinet confirmed its original decisions.

South Road Experimental Closure – January 2005

The Officer Delegated Decision to temporarily block off parts of South Road in a bid to calm traffic and reduce speed was called-in. Although Councillors agreed that traffic calming was needed in the area, they were dissatisfied with the consultation that had taken place, and felt that other measures to reduce speeding traffic had not been fully considered. After thorough questioning of the Officer, the Committee decided to endorse his decision, although they recommended that, in future, all decisions subject to a recommendation following a Call-in should be referred back to full Cabinet for reconsideration rather than to the same officer to whom the decision had originally been delegated, and that the Council's Constitution should be amended accordingly. The Audit Committee will consider this recommendation at their next meeting.



Holding Cabinet Members to Account

Over the past year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has had a rolling programme of holding Cabinet Members to account. This has taken place both in the course of Call-in and considering items of business at Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Budget and Performance Panel and Task Groups, but also through arranging for Cabinet Members to come to a meeting to discuss issues and developments within their portfolios. It is proposed to continue this procedure in the new Municipal Year.

Additionally each member of Overview and Scrutiny Committee has taken on a rôle of Cabinet Liaison Member to help keep the committee informed of issues within individual Cabinet portfolios as set out below:

Cabinet Member

Councillor Ian Barker
Councillor Jon Barry
Councillor Eileen Blamire
Councillor Abbott Bryning
Councillor Gina Dowding
Councillor Janice Hanson
Councillor Joyce Pritchard
Councillor Pat Quinton
Councillor Ron Sands
Councillor Alex Stone

Cabinet Liaison Member

Councillor Roger Mace
Councillor Peter Robinson
Councillor Robert Redfern
Councillor Emily Heath
Councillor Stuart Langhorn
Councillor Robert Redfern
Councillor Peter Robinson
Councillor Sarah Fishwick
Councillor Evelyn Archer
Councillor Roger Mace

Urgent Business

Under the Council's constitution, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for considering requests from Cabinet Members and the Chief Executive to waive the right to Call-in decisions in the case of urgency. This is an important responsibility and it is often difficult to find a balance between ensuring that urgent decisions are made as quickly as possible, and preventing adverse impact on the right of Councillors to Call-in a decision. Councillor Mace has made it clear that he will only agree to waive Call-in as an exception and only on issues where it is proved that there will be an adverse impact to the Authority or the local community if the decision were not implemented without the delay occasioned by the possibility or actuality of a Call-in. A report is currently being prepared for the Overview and Scrutiny on the use of this power and this issue will be covered in greater depth in the next Annual Report.



Budget and Performance Panel



Cllr Keith Budden
(Chairman)



Cllr Tina Clifford



Cllr Mike Greenall



Cllr John Gilbert
(Vice-Chairman)



Cllr Tony Johnson



Cllr Janie Kirkman



Cllr Peter Robinson



Cllr Roger Sherlock



Cllr John Whitelegg

Introduction

The Budget and Performance Panel have responsibility for carrying out Overview and Scrutiny in respect of the Council's Budget and Performance at both the Strategic and Service level. In accordance with the Council's objectives and core values, the Panel helps to ensure that the management of financial affairs are efficient, prudent, and work best for the residents of the District and that there is effective monitoring of Council performance that leads to continuous improvements in services. The Panel has scrutinised and reviewed the Budget, voluntary sector grants and Star Chamber process, and recommend how the Council could make additional savings in order to help prevent further Council Tax increases. The Panel has also begun to review and scrutinise the Council's 16 Services, beginning with Health and Strategic Housing, City Contract Services and Revenues, to ensure that they are working as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible, and provide a good level of service to customers.

Core Values 2004-05

"We are committed to effective, efficient and prudent management of the Council's financial affairs."

Other major functions of the Budget and Performance Panel include:

- Monitoring and reviewing Services in achieving their Business Plans.
- Scrutinising the Council's performance in budgetary management and targets, treasury management, property and asset acquisition and disposal,

capital programme and evaluating the effectiveness of its financial and operational policies and procedures.

- Reviewing the Council's strategic performance and monitoring Performance Indicators and benchmarking.
- Monitoring external Service Level Agreements and other contracts that the Council has entered into.
- Performing the Overview and Scrutiny function in relation to all of the Council's Corporate Performance and Best Value activity.

The specific focus on Budget and Performance that the Panel allows is a new development for the Council and, in part, responds to concerns over performance management as set out in the Corporate Performance Assessment. Over the course of 2004/05, the Panel has reviewed a number of areas.

Members received copies of all Service Business Plans and the Panel used Performance Indicators and budget variances in order to decide on a risk management basis which Service Business Plans to consider in greater detail. It is proposed to further develop this process in the coming year. Through carrying out this process in regard to homelessness the Panel has commissioned a piece of work in partnership with the University of Lancaster to consider the reasons for the high number of applicants presenting as homeless in the district. This is scheduled to take place in October 2005.

The Panel has continued to receive regular updates on the Star Chamber process (Lancaster's rolling efficiency programme) from the Leader of the Council and contributed additional savings suggestions where appropriate. The Panel has also been involved and kept updated on progress of the Access to Services Best Value review.

The Panel has also received presentations from voluntary organisations which have a Service Level Agreement with the Council and from the Leader of the Council on the budget proposals. It is intended that this process is further developed in 2005/06 to produce a more meaningful process that makes a greater contribution to the process.

Whilst the Panel has received performance information, this has been hampered by the Council's performance management system. For instance, the Council does not yet produce quarterly monitoring of Performance Indicators, which has resulted in the Panel having to base their work programme on out-of-date information. Similarly, the Panel would like to see more commentary from Services' accompanying Performance Indicators, which, if provided, would help to prevent Service Heads being requested to attend unnecessarily.

The Panel has also carried out a scoping report into Open Source Software and how these ideas may be further developed and applied at the Council in order to provide future cost savings. The Panel expressed concerns that there were difficulties in providing staff from Information Services to assist with this work and felt that difficulties like this could hamper the effectiveness of future work by the Panel. This report was referred to the Cabinet and further feasibility work is currently taking place.

The Panel believes that whilst it has made a positive start to this area of work, much remains to be done.

Task Groups

Task Groups may be established to undertake specific project work, policy development, a specific task, consultation, review investigation or similar activity.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides whether a Task Group should be formal and report directly to the Cabinet or Council or, exceptionally, be informal and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Task Groups will normally consist of nine Councillors on a Proportional Representation basis.

The majority of the Task Groups will operate for three months or less and will produce one Final Report during their lifetime.

Poulton Area Renewal Task Group

Members: Councillors Roger Mace (Chairman), Susan Bray, John Gilbert and Peter Robinson

The Task Group was established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 July 2004. At this meeting, a number of residents of the Poulton Area expressed concerns that there had been changes to the Area Renewal, which had affected the boundary of the scheme. Additionally, Councillors present expressed concern over their own lack of information regarding the scheme and concerns over the property purchasing elements of the scheme. The purpose of the Task Group was to investigate these concerns in order to reassure the public and put Councillors' minds at rest through giving them a full understanding of the Renewal.

Quote from Task Group Chairman Councillor Mace

"Renewal and regeneration activities are necessary and valuable components of Council policy. Nevertheless they are discriminatory between one area of the District and another, and so positive discrimination associated with renewal and regeneration needs careful and sensitive management if it is to rebuild communities. This Task Group has sought to make recommendations that enhance the effectiveness of renewal and regeneration activity, so that it carries the support and confidence of those affected by it."

The Task Group has produced an Interim Report which was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9 March 2005. At the first meeting of the Task Group, it was noted that an investigation was taking place into aspects of the Poulton Area Renewal, which would necessitate the deferral of work on one of the Terms of Reference until after the outcome was known. The investigation is still continuing at the time of writing the report, and, as a result, it was only interim and did not cover all the issues in the Terms of Reference. It is the Task Group's intention to complete its work and produce its Final Report as soon as possible.

The Task Group's Interim Report has made a number of recommendations which include:

- Integrating future housing work with the Council's economic development plans and strategies in order to deliver a holistic solution to sustainability.
- Making resources available for an evaluative review to take place of the Poulton Area Renewal and that establishing a policy for periodic reviews or reality checks in order to improve public accountability.

- Keeping Members better informed of changes to boundaries of renewal areas and funding streams.
- The widening of the Council's sustainability principles, in particular to include in reports and projects measurable indicators and targets relating to social, economic and environmental sustainability.

West End Area Activities Task Group

Members: Councillors Peter Robinson (Chairman), Evelyn Archer, Susan Bray, Ken Brown, Anne Chapman, Tina Clifford, John Day, Mike Greenall, David Whitaker.

The Task Group was established as a result of concerns of possible duplication of effort by different agencies operating in the West End. The Group questioned whether such funding could be focused to save the same agencies chasing the same funding, thereby reducing overheads, focusing efforts more and maximise outcomes. The Task Group has been looking at the evidence to see whether a better co-ordinated approach might deliver their objectives. The final report is expected soon.

Quote from Task Group Chairman Cllr Robinson

"The West End Area Activities Task Group was established to look at the way in which the various public and voluntary sector bodies had, were, and may be operating to ensure that there is no duplication of services and a more strategic approach to funding bids. The Task Group has been looking at the evidence to see whether a better co-ordinated approach might deliver their objectives. The final draft report is expected soon."

Achievements

The Task Group has met with a number of organisations operating in the West End and considered which of these activities may be sustainable in the medium term. The Task Group has also considered the issue of co-ordination of activity in the West End and how this could be improved and enhanced. These issues will be dealt with more fully in the final report of the West End Area Activities Review Task Group.



Media and Public Relations

A particular area of success for Scrutiny at Lancaster City Council has been the strong relationship it has formed with the local media over the last year. A briefing was held at the start of the Municipal Year for representatives of the local press regarding the new scrutiny arrangements.

Over the year, over £5,000 worth of free publicity has been generated through the use of 12 Press Releases circulated by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Press Releases were issued to the *Visitor*, *Lancaster Guardian*, *Lancaster and Morecambe Citizen*, *Bay Radio*, *Radio Lancashire* and a local news website, *Virtual Lancaster*. However, the value does not take into account the cost of air time given by the two local radio stations and the space taken up by the website.

The figures have been generated by 'Newsflash' which is a new media monitoring software used by Council's Communications Services.

Date	Title	Take up	Equivalent Advertising Value
08.02.05	Cemeteries under Scrutiny	3	£1892.00
08.02.05	Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorses decision to temporarily close South Road	3	£736.00
27.01.05	Road closure proposals called in by Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4	£489.20
26.01.05	Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrap proposals for evening parking charges	1	£130.00
18.01.05	Parking charges decision called in by Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3	£360.00
11.01.05	Cabinet considers allotment recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny	2	£204.60
7.12.04	Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers two items of urgent business	2	£400.00
3.12.04	Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorses Parks and Open Spaces Strategy	1	£420.00
5.11.04	Cabinet decision on festivals and toilets called in for Scrutiny	3	£332.00
1.10.04	Overview and scrutiny committee calls time on smoking in Council venues	2	£480.00
27.09.04	Scrutiny Chair authorises urgent business	0	-
30.06.04	Council parking decision called in for Scrutiny	0	-
TOTAL EAV (Estimated Advertising Value)			£5,443.20

Website Hits

The number of hits each Press Release received in the Council's website cannot be ascertained at the moment. However, once our website has been upgraded in the not too distant future, such figures will be available.

Public Relations

Effectively engaging the public remains a challenge for Overview and Scrutiny. Over the last year this has improved, with significant public involvement being generated through press coverage. This has been particularly noticeable with regard to Call-in decisions such as, the South Road closure, the West End Action Plan, and Festivals, which attracted public interest and involvement. Other areas of work, including cemeteries, fly-tipping, Poulton Area Renewal, and allotments have also attracted public contributions.



Training and Development

With the introduction of the new Overview and Scrutiny system in 2004, training and development has taken on a higher profile than in previous years. The emphasis has been on assisting and equipping both Members and Officers to deliver a successful Scrutiny work programme which, in turn, contributes to achieving the Council's agreed objectives.

This has been achieved by a shift away from formal training days provided by external providers to a more targeted and Lancaster specific approach.

Briefings

Early in the Municipal Year, informal briefings were held for Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget and Performance Panel; this was complimented by training for Officers as part of the general training on Lancaster's democratic processes. It is intended that further training will be provided for Officers in the coming year with regard to the Overview and Scrutiny procedure, with particular focus on producing reports for Overview and Scrutiny and on the rôle of Officers as expert witnesses and advisors.

One to One Support

Many Councillors have taken up the offer of meeting with Scrutiny Support Officers to discuss Overview and Scrutiny and their rôle within it. These discussions have included successful Call-in, questioning approaches, how to scrutinise different issues, setting up Task Groups, Pre-decision Scrutiny, Performance and Financial Scrutiny and one-to-one support for Councillors in carrying out various Scrutiny activities. This approach has proved effective and will be continued in the coming year.

It is intended to supplement this approach, where appropriate, with specific training from external providers on specialist issues such as scrutinising finance, effective Scrutiny for Officers and developing effective Scrutiny, subject to budget availability.

Annual Scrutiny Event

In December 2004, Overview and Scrutiny working with the Council's Training and Development Officer, held a Member and Officer briefing as part of the Corporate Training programme. The Council was fortunate enough to obtain the services of Dr Jane Martin, Director of the Centre for Public Scrutiny. Dr Martin shared with Members her experience of the ingredients for successful Scrutiny, illustrated with examples of good practice and case studies, and answered questions on Scrutiny in general and on Lancaster's Scrutiny arrangements. Those attending the event felt the experience was worthwhile, and it is proposed that the event should be repeated in 2005/06 as part of the Member Development Programme.

If Lancaster City Council is to be successful in becoming an 'excellent authority', a central rôle for training and development needs to be retained and resources provided for this in order to ensure that robust Overview and Scrutiny is in place.

Joint Working and Networks

As part of the review of the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements at Lancaster City Council, it was acknowledged that under the Review Board system there had only been limited participation in joint Scrutiny with other authorities and only limited involvement in Scrutiny networks in terms of development and disseminating best practice. Throughout the year, attempts have been made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to address this imbalance, although it is acknowledged that joint Scrutiny can have costs both in terms of finance and time.

Health Scrutiny

Throughout the year, Councillor David Kerr – as a representative of Lancaster's Overview and Scrutiny Committee – has sat on the Joint Cumbria and Lancashire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Potentially, health is the area of Overview and Scrutiny that has the most influential role, with statutory powers under the Health and Social Care Act 2001, to veto service configurations through referring them to the Secretary of State for Health. The specific functions of the Joint Committee include to critically examine the proposals of the Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust and their evidence base, and to take account of the evidence and views of user, carer and public interest.

Additionally, this year Councillor Kerr has represented Lancaster City Council on the joint review of Mental Health Care Provision in Morecambe Bay, carried out by Lancashire County and Cumbria County Councils jointly with South Lakeland, Lancaster City and Barrow-in-Furness Councils. This was a good example of joint authority working on an important issue for the local community. The review was comprehensive and made 10 recommendations, including that the PCT should:

- Look for new ways to engage local communities with the implementation of improvements to mental health services for adults.
- Continue to give priority to locally available training in medicine and other professions as a means of addressing local shortages.
- Give a guarantee that bed numbers will only be reduced once there is clear evidence that alternative services are in place and working.
- Work closely with Social Services and others on commissioning supported housing, in particular consulting with local communities on establishing new supported housing in suitable neighbourhoods.

Lancashire Scrutiny Network

Lancaster representatives have been regular attendees at the Lancashire Scrutiny Network. The network was founded in 2004 to aid the development of Overview and Scrutiny in Lancashire authorities. During the year, the network has held a series of seminars at different locations across the County, focussing on disseminating best practice, raising where joint Scrutiny between authorities may be appropriate to prevent duplication and maximise resources, liaising between the County and District Authorities in order to help shape the County Council work programme and to highlight where authorities are carrying out complimentary reviews which could assist authorities with their own reviews. Over the last year, attendees have included both Officer and Member representatives from the City Council and it is intended to widen this opportunity to other non-executive Councillors in the coming year.

Northwest Scrutiny Officer Network

Officers from Lancaster City Council have attended several meetings of the Northwest Scrutiny Officer Network. The group comprises of officers who support the Overview and Scrutiny function (representing all the local authorities in the North West of England). The group exists to share best practice issues to avoid duplication and maximise the resources available to assist in the development of Scrutiny. The membership of the group includes authorities such as Tameside, Stockport, Liverpool, Cumbria Lancashire and Blackpool and thus has access to significant expertise and knowledge. Recently, the group has been involved in developing best practice notes in terms of Call-in and the role of Scrutiny in performance management, both of which will assist the development of the Scrutiny process at Lancaster.

Additionally, the group has received a presentation from the Audit Commission advising on which elements of Overview and Scrutiny will be assessed by the Commission as part of the revised Corporate Performance Assessment process for 2005 and what their expectations of Overview and Scrutiny will be.

Scrutiny Champions Network

As members of the Scrutiny Champions Network, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Principal Democratic Support Officer have continued to receive updates and guidance from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). Year 2004 has seen the Council making use of the resources of the Centre for Public Scrutiny, including training from Dr Jane Martin and use of the powerful CfPS database to obtain information on Scrutiny reviews by other authorities on allotments, cemeteries and climate change. Additionally, Lancaster City Council has begun to contribute its own reports to this national resource beginning with its report on allotments.

Appointments to Other Bodies

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (at the request of Council) has made a number of appointments to other bodies. These appointees have attended meetings and kept the Overview and Scrutiny process informed of developments. These appointments are set out below:

Local Strategic Partnership:

- Community Safety Strategy Group – Councillor Peter Robinson
- Regeneration Building Block – Councillor Emily Heath
- Health and Well-being Group – Councillor Roger Mace
- Children and Young People Group – Councillor Stuart Langhorn
- Local Agenda 21 Partnership Steering Group – Councillor Roger Mace
- Multi-Agency partnership for the Elimination of Discrimination – Councillor Emily Heath
- Life Long Learning – Councillor Evelyn Archer

Other Bodies:

- Homelessness Forum – Councillor Peter Robinson
- Lancashire County Council Health Equalities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor David Kerr
- Lancaster, Morecambe and District Fairtrade Steering Group – Councillor David Kerr
- Museums Advisory Panel – Councillor Evelyn Archer

Constraints and Challenges

There are a number of constraints and challenges that the Overview and Scrutiny has faced in its first full year of operation and a summary of the key issues is set out below. They will be addressed in the work programme for 2005/06.

- Time constraints – There has been some difficulty in Task Groups completing their work within 3 months. This has, in part, been due to the difficulty in obtaining information in a timely way, the availability of Officers to attend meetings/carry out work and the time for Officers and Members to adapt to a Member led process.
- Functioning of the Forward Plan – There have been difficulties with using the Forward Plan to identify items for Pre-decision Scrutiny, due to the number of Key Decisions which are added to the plan at a later date and the decision-making timetable.
- Realisation of Power – There is still a feeling amongst some non-executive Councillors that they have few opportunities for engaging with the decision making process. Overview and Scrutiny still has to balance involving a greater number of Councillors in the process whilst ensuring an efficient and effective Member led process occurs.
- Lack of understanding – There is still a lack of understanding and awareness amongst Councillors and Officers over how the modernised decision-making arrangements operate and how they can engage with this process.
- Engaging the public – Whilst there have been positive steps in engaging the public, it is felt that this is still a challenge and that much more needs to be done.

Conclusion & Looking to the Future

The new Overview and Scrutiny system has made progress over the last 12 months and a number of achievements have been highlighted in this report. It is the belief of those involved in Overview and Scrutiny that given the right support and access to information the Overview and Scrutiny process can deliver further benefits to the Council and residents of the District.

"I wish every success also to the continued work of Overview & Scrutiny Committee and believe it will continue to make a valuable contribution to the work of the Council."

**Letter of Resignation from the City Council
Councillor Gareth Millar (March 2005)
Member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2004/05**

Looking to the Future

Both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Budget and Performance Panel have begun to consider items for their Work Programmes for 2005/06. Many of the items are new. The items proposed to date are as follows:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cemeteries Task Group – this aims to investigate the current public concern with the state of the Council's cemeteries with regard to problems of maintenance, headstones, anti-social behaviour and security.

Young People and Lancaster City Council Task Group – the Task Group will investigate how young people can be encouraged to become more actively interested and involved with the work of the Council.

Climate Change – This issue will be picked up by the Committee later in the year following further work by Local Strategic Partnership Group looking at energy usage.

Poulton Area Renewal Task Group – the group will be able to complete their work in due course and is expected to make recommendations with regard to communication and property purchasing.

Budget and Performance Panel

Partnership Monitoring – the Panel will establish and investigate possible ways in which the effectiveness of the Council's Partnerships can be monitored to ensure that they are cost-effective and achieving their targets.

Services Monitoring – Services that have under performed in terms of their Performance Indicators will be questioned by the Panel.

Areas for Improvement

It is felt throughout the Council that the Overview and Scrutiny process at Lancaster has come on a long way in the year 2004/05. However, it is recognised that there is still work to be done and areas of improvement that need to be made in order to establish a more efficient and effective Scrutiny process. In 2005/06, Scrutiny Councillors and Officers propose to concentrate on making progress and improvements in the areas listed below:

- Seeking to reduce the length of meetings to 3 hours and consideration of Call-ins to 1 hour in duration.
- Seeking to further develop the Work Programmes to ensure that the Scrutiny process contributes to the Council's Corporate Objectives.
- Continuing to raise the profile of Overview and Scrutiny within and outside of the City Council.
- Seeking to develop further ways in which public involvement can be increased in the Scrutiny process.



Acknowledgements

Overview and Scrutiny Councillors and Officers would like to thank the following for their contribution to the Scrutiny process during 2004/05:

- Cabinet Members who have appeared before Overview and Scrutiny bodies;
- All members of the Administration Services team;
- Staff who have participated in Overview and Scrutiny reviews;
- Members of the public who have attended meetings or submitted evidence as part of the ongoing work of Scrutiny.
- Councillor Susie Charles (Member of Committee until 15th December 2004)
- Councillor Gareth Millar (Member of Committee until 17th March 2005)

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer Support Team

To contact the Overview and Scrutiny Support team, or to make suggestions for issues you would like to see included in the Overview and Scrutiny Work programme, e-mail scrutiny@lancaster.gov.uk

Name	Position	Responsibility	Contact Details
Roger Muckle	Corporate Director (Central Services)	Corporate Director with overall responsibility for Overview and Scrutiny	(01524) 582022 rmuckle@lancaster.gov.uk
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Jenny Kay	Democratic Support Officer	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (including Call-in) and Task Group support	(01524) 582065 jkay@lancaster.gov.uk
Georgina Atkinson	Democratic Support Officer	Budget and Performance Panel and Task Group support	(01524) 582132 gatkinson2@lancaster.gov.uk

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would like to thank Laura Ellis and John Addison for their assistance and help in establishing and supporting the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements during the last year. They have both been promoted to become senior scrutiny officers, taking up posts at Wakefield and Blackburn with Darwen unitary authorities respectively.

APPENDIX A – Scrutiny and the Corporate Objectives

How the Scrutiny process has contributed to Lancaster City Council's corporate objectives – an analysis

MEETING ESSENTIAL NEEDS

Smoking in Council Venues

At the September meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Dr Frank Atherton, Director of Public Health for Morecambe Bay, gave a presentation about the effects of smoking in public places. He explained that reducing the opportunity to smoke in public places led to a reduction of smoking, and suggested that the Council had a responsibility for public venues, and it was therefore in their interest to promote smoke free areas. He recommended that the Council should participate in the Tobacco Alliance and encouraged Members to consider restricting and preventing smoking in Council buildings and venues. Through questioning and discussion, Members agreed that the Committee should note the dangers of passive smoking and recommend to Cabinet that all of the Council's indoor public venues should be non-smoking. As a result, the recommendation was passed and now all of the Council's venues are non-smoking, which is a positive step towards improving the health of the District's citizens and employees.

Corporate Plan 2004-05

"Improving the health and well-being of our citizens and employees"

West End Area Activities Task Group

The Task Group was established following a concern over activities and the social infrastructure in the West End Area of Morecambe, in particular regarding: education and training; health care; cultural and recreational facilities; and the voluntary sector.

Corporate Plan 2004-05

"Reducing crime, the fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour"

At the October meeting of the Task Group, two Street Wardens were requested to attend to answer the Members' questions regarding crime and anti-social behaviour in the West End.

Issues that were discussed included drugs, crime, graffiti and rubbish and the effect of the Street Wardens in preventing these problems. The Members noted the responses given by the Wardens and from this were able to form a number of recommendations for their final report, which is to be finished this municipal year.

TAKING PART

Poulton Area Renewal Task Group

The Task Group came about following public concern over the cutting of grants and changes of boundaries for the Poulton Area Renewal. After several months of meetings and gathering of evidence, the Task Group submitted their interim Report to the Committee in March 2005, which included a recommendation that Members be kept better informed of changes to boundaries of renewal areas and to funding streams during future renewal processes and that future large regeneration activities contain a section on Member communication in the Communication Strategy.

Corporate Plan 2004-05

"Consulting, listening and communicating with the public and partners, and managing our organisation, to ensure our services are driven by their needs and priorities and offer quality and value for money."

It also recommended that the Council establishes a policy to have periodic reviews or reality checks in order to improve public accountability.

'Your District Matters' Scrutiny article and media relations

It is a priority for the Scrutiny function at Lancaster City Council to engage the public and obtain ideas for Scrutiny from them. Whilst it is widely acknowledged that public involvement is an important factor for Scrutiny, public involvement across the country is limited and Lancaster City Council is no exception. One of the reasons for this could be due to a lack of understanding of the Scrutiny process and little coverage of

Corporate Plan 2004-05

"Seeking ways to improve the ways we communicate externally and internally."

the difference Scrutiny can make in the local press.

It was agreed that the best and most cost-effective way to engage the public was to publish an article in the Council newsletter.

Your District Council Matters is a free publication delivered to every residence in the District, and it was felt that this would be the best way to achieve publicity for Overview and Scrutiny.

A Scrutiny article is to be published in the next edition, which will include a tear-off section where readers can contribute their ideas to the Council. The article will give a brief overview of the Scrutiny process at Lancaster, and will explain how residents of the District have the power to get involved and help to scrutinise their Council.

Additionally, over the past year, Overview and Scrutiny has received excellent press coverage, through producing press releases following each meeting.

CARE AND RESPECT FOR EVERYONE

Development of a Youth Strategy

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a report on the development of a Youth Strategy for Lancaster City Council by Councillor Dowding. This was presented at the December meeting of the Committee in which she highlighted the situation of the Council and other organisations towards consulting and encouraging young people. It was felt by individual Members that a Young People and Lancaster City Council Task Group should be established to concentrate more on involving young people, rather than just consulting them. A Scoping Template was circulated to Members which outlined the Task Group's Terms of Reference, which was later approved. The establishment of the Task Group is now underway, and it is anticipated that it will begin meeting in the near future.

Corporate Plan 2004-05

"Tackling discrimination and prejudice against any individual or community and celebrate and embrace diversity and actively promoting tolerance."

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Scrutiny Training by CfPS

In December 2004, Dr Jane Martin, Director of Centre for Public Scrutiny, gave a presentation session about the Scrutiny role and function for local authorities. Both elected Members and Officers were present at the session as part of the Corporate Training programme. Dr Martin shared with Members her experience of the ingredients for successful Scrutiny, illustrated with examples of good practice and case studies and answered questions on Scrutiny in general and Lancaster's Scrutiny arrangements. Those attending the event felt the experience was worthwhile and it is proposed that the event should be repeated in 2006/06 as part of the Member Development Programme.

Corporate Plan 2004-05
"Providing effective and efficient training and extending development opportunities to every employee and elected Member."

TRAVEL AND ACCESS

South Road Call-In

In February 2005, a number of elected Members decided to Call-in an Officer Delegated Decision to temporarily block off parts of South Road in a bid to calm traffic and reduce speed. Although the Councillors agreed that traffic calming was needed in the area, and eventually accepted the officer decision, they were dissatisfied with the consultation that had taken place, and felt that had finance been available, alternative measures (such as speed cameras) to discourage speeding traffic should have been given more consideration, which would have had a lesser effect on traffic diversion and the creation of congestion and new dangers on other roads.

Corporate Plan 2004-05
"Improving the provision, integration and use of road, rail, cycling and walking networks"

FUN CREATIVITY AND LEISURE

Call-in Festivals Programme 2005

Corporate Plan 2004-05
"Utilising culture in its broadest aspect to promote City, Coast and Countryside"

Members called-in the Festivals Programme as they felt concerned with a number of areas, in particular the decision to cut the Festival of Light and Water due to its importance towards the economy of Morecambe. Through the course of the meeting it became evident that funding and sponsorship was a significant factor as to why the Festival of Light and Water had been cut from the Programme, and so from this the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were able to make an informed Cabinet recommendation for the Head of Arts and Events to increase efforts to find sponsorship and grants to enable the Festival of Light and Water, or similar, to be added to the core Programme.

USING RESOURCES WISELY

Street Cleansing and Fly-tipping

It was requested that a report be presented to update the Committee on the Council's situation with fly-tipping and street cleansing. The reports outlined the recent increase in the number of instances of fly-tipping in certain areas, and likened this to the change of waste acceptance at local tips. It also covered the success of the pilot scheme in Castle Ward, where tipping had decreased due to the presence and enforcement powers of the Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs). Through discussions it was agreed by Members of the Committee that Cabinet be recommended to continue the pilot scheme throughout the whole of the District in a bid to reduce fly-tipping and improve street cleanliness. With regard to the increase in tipping, it was agreed that efforts would be made to form a Task Group with Lancashire County Council to address the problem, and discussions on the establishment on this are ongoing at present.

Corporate Plan 2004-05
"Improving the cleanliness of our streets, alleyways and local environment."

PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND LANDSCAPES

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

The report was presented at the meeting by the Chief Leisure Officer, who outlined the work by the Parks Task Group. Through the meeting, Members raised a number of questions and it was confirmed that a wide consultation had taken place on the Strategy and that consideration was being given to greater stakeholder involvement in parks management. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved that the Strategy be approved but that Cabinet's attention must be drawn to the budgetary implications of the Action Plan. The Committee also recommended that Cabinet considers increasing funding for the flowerbeds and ornamental green space, and so tries to encourage outside funding through an article in 'Your District Matters'.

Corporate Plan 2004-05 *"Protecting and enhancing the environmental wealth and bio-diversity of our District"*

Allotments

On behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Allotments Working Group wrote a report, which included a number of recommendations that aim to enhance and improve Council-owned allotments and benefit their owners. The recommendations set out in the report included increased support for allotments from the Council, stronger links with local Allotments Associations and a designated Council Officer to support allotments and deal directly with owners. At the December meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Recommendations were agreed upon and referred to Cabinet.

ECONOMY AND WORK

Poulton Area Renewal Task Group

In addition to their work towards Taking Part with local residents, the Task Group also reviewed the sustainability of the Poulton area. Members felt that the renewal work did not include adequate provisions of employment, and therefore the area may not become sustainable. Throughout their meetings they obtained evidence from Poulton Neighbourhood Management, the BEST Centres and the Council's Economic Development Service to try to ascertain how improved employment and business could be established in Poulton. They also identified a number of areas where tourism could be generated. With regard to this, their Interim Report included a recommendation that future housing regeneration work should be integrated with the Council's economic development plans and strategies in order to deliver a holistic solution to sustainability, which respects existing businesses and considers social and economic sustainability.

Corporate Plan 2004-05

"Ensuring that that whole district has a vibrant, varied and viable local economy and targeting deprivation and unemployment in parts of our district."

POSITIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

West End Masterplan

The discussion at the December Overview and Scrutiny Committee came about following a number of issues that were raised at a public meeting of the Winning Back the West End Steering Group.

Corporate Plan 2004-05

"Using the Planning System to enhance and preserve the quality of life for those who live and work in the District, and to preserve and promote the heritage of our private and public buildings."

It was felt that the two main areas for concern had arisen from the community consultation – firstly, the Battery and Promenade area and secondly, how the process dealt with affected residents. The Corporate Director (Regeneration) attended the December Committee meeting to

answer the Members' questions regarding such concerns. Following discussions, Members of the Committee requested further information and future updates regarding the West End Masterplan in order to monitor and scrutinise the process to ensure that the residents' concerns are addressed, and recommendations were presented to Cabinet.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

How does the Scrutiny function contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?

Overview and Scrutiny area of work	Contributing to Corporate Objectives									
	Meeting essential needs	Taking part	Care and Respect for Everyone	Life Long Learning	Travel and Access	Fun Creativity and Leisure	Using Resources Wisely	Protecting Wildlife and Landscapes	Economy and Work	Positive Planning and Development
Overview and Scrutiny Committee										
Allotments				√		√		√		
Flooding Strategy	√						√	√		√
Youth Strategy	√	√	√							
Partnership Monitoring		√					√			
Street Cleansing and Fly Tipping			√				√	√		
Smoking in Council Venues	√		√						√	
Abandoned Vehicles Morecambe Bay	√						√	√		
Millennium Bridge					√	√				√
Parks and Open Spaces Strategy	√				√	√		√		√
West End Masterplan	√	√	√		√		√		√	√
Draft Smoking Policy			√	√					√	
Cemeteries	√	√	√				√	√		
Call-ins										
Morecambe Action Plan	√	√			√		√		√	√
Decriminalization of Parking Enforcement	√				√		√		√	
Festivals Programme 2005		√				√	√		√	
Provision of Public Conveniences	√		√				√		√	
Parking Charges		√			√		√		√	
South Road Closure		√	√		√					
Budget and Performance Panel										
Access to Services Review	√	√			√		√			
Star Chamber Process	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Business Plan Monitoring	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Corporate Finance & Revenue Outturn Monitoring							√			
Best Value Performance Plan/Indicators	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Homelessness Strategy	√	√	√				√			
Budget 2005/06	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Corporate Grants - Service Level Agreements	√	√	√		√	√	√			
Open Source Software							√			
Performance Management							√			
Task Groups										
Poulton Area Renewal Task Group	√	√			√	√	√	√	√	√
West End Area Activities Task Group	√	√	√			√	√		√	√